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Alan Newman's athletics reports appear in the Kent Messenger each Friday

KENT MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE

Mike Coleman of Medway and Maidstone AC made a successful return to the Kent Men's cross country league to win the second race of the season at Somerhill School, Tonbridge on Saturday, writes Alan Newman.

Coleman last competed in this league at this venue a year ago and he also won that race in a time that was five seconds faster. Alex Bruce-Littlewood and Andy Rayner of Blackheath and Bromley Harriers provided the sternest opposition to the six times Kent cross country champion.

Steep hills with Tonbridge on top are recurring themes this winter. League champion, Huw Jones was fourth for the defending champions followed by team mates Dan Bradley and Julian Rendall. Darrell Smith (9th) clinched victory for the hosts with Harry Paton (10th) providing valuable insurance.

Blackheath and Bromley Harriers had Alex Gibbins (7th) and Dave McKinley (15th) to thank for their improvement to second place on the day. Medway and Maidstone weighed in with Adrian Lowther (8th), Tom Collins (11th) and James Hogg (12th) for third overall.

Tonbridge AC also consolidated their lead in the Duodec twelve to score competition with victory from Blackheath and Bromley Harriers and Tunbridge Wells Harriers. There were 150 finishers in the second race of the series.

The Kent Men's League concludes with races on December 4 and February 12 at New Barn Park, Swanley.

KENT WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE

Deirdre McDermott of Tonbridge AC has one hand on the individual trophy already after a second successive victory in the Kent Women's cross country league at Somerhill School, Tonbridge on Saturday, writes Alan Newman.

British Masters W45 international, Clare Elms of Beckenham Running Club made a great race of it and the margin was a mere 12 seconds at the line. Junior athlete, Lucy Reid of Tonbridge was third, just five seconds ahead of Paddock Wood's W40 master, Tina Oldershaw. Former league champion, Helcha Penfold, was fifth for Medway and Maidstone and Liz Weekes completed the top six for Invicta East Kent.

Tonbridge took the team race on home soil but it was mighty close with local rivals Medway and Maidstone. The hosts had to wait for Pippa Blackstone (27th) to seal the victory after M&M had completed their scorers through junior

athlete Ejiro Okoro (11th) and Bernadette Harrop (18th). Blackheath and Bromley Harriers finished third, led by Jennie Butler (7th).

The Kent Women's League concludes with races on November 13 at Danson Park, Bexleyheath and February 12 at New Barn Park, Swanley.

KENT YOUNG ATHLETES CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE

Tonbridge AC took four team and three individual wins in their home fixture in the Kent Young Athletes cross country league at Somerhill School, Tonbridge on Saturday, writes Alan Newman. Blackheath and Bromley Harriers also had their successes with three team wins and two victories in the girl's races.

In the under 13 boy's race Stuart Brown, Kendrick Thomas and Chris Cohen scored a clean sweep for Tonbridge. Medway and Maidstone were led by Cameron Payas (8th) into second place and Harry Jarvis (13th) was third placed Bexley's team leader.

In the under 15s it was George Duggan and Corey De'ath at the front for Tonbridge but James West of Medway and Maidstone forced his way onto the podium in third place. Sean Molloy (6th) completed the winning Tonbridge team from fourth placed Jack Goss's Ashford AC and Cambridge Harriers.

It was business as usual for Tonbridge in the under 17s race where the much improved Henry Pearce was followed by Chris Lloyd and Robbie Farnham-Rose. Dominic Brown and Jamie Bryant also crossed the line before Kieran Reilly came in sixth for Invicta East Kent. Invicta and Bexley AC were the next two clubs to finish.

Rob MacDonald of Cambridge Harriers won his second race of the season in the under 20s in a reprise of the first race, with John Dickinson (Tonbridge) and Jamie Bailey (Invicta) completing the podium. Cambridge Harriers were the team winners.

Blackheath and Bromley dominated the under 13 girl's race with Georgina Taylor and Niamh Bridson Hubbard and Ellen Whitehead of Invicta East Kent claiming the podium. Blackheath and Bromley, Invicta and Cambridge Harriers were the top three teams in a repeat of the first match.

Blackheath and Bromley also won the under 15s team race, although Bobby Clay of Invicta grabbed her second individual victory from Kate Curran (Blackheath and Bromley) and Leah Melvin (Tonbridge). Cambridge Harriers and Tonbridge were the nearest opposition.

Tonbridge won the under 17s team race where the top three individuals were Ellie Hume (Invicta), Nicole Taylor (Tonbridge) and Beth Armstrong (Bexley).

Four athletes contested the under 20s race and there was a clean sweep for Blackheath and Bromley Harriers through Danielle Critchley, Krystal Galley and Michelle Fewster. Samantha Beckett of Ashford was fourth.

The Kent Young Athlete's League concludes with races on November 13 at Danson Park, Bexleyheath and December 4 at New Barn Park, Swanley.

Alan Newman